

Message Text

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13

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6115

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CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 2048

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KS

SUBJECT: ROK NEWSPAPER NEEDLES PRESIDENT PAK OVER WILSON
RESIGNATION

DEPT. PASS TO USIA/IEA

1. IN INTERESTING DEMONSTRATION THAT ROK PRESS MAY BE DOWN BUT NOT ALTOGETHER OUT, TONGA ILBO, SEOUL'S LEADING OPPOSITION NEWSPAPER, USED LAYOUT, PRESS PLAY, AND HEADLINE WORKING OF FEATURE STORY ON UK PRIME MINISTER HAROLD WILSON'S RESIGNATION TO DELIVER VEILED INJUNCTION TO PRESIDENT PAK THAT HE MIGHT CONSIDER FOLLOWING SUIT. SUB-HEADLINES INTERSPERSED THROUGHOUT THE ARTICLE IN THE FIRST EDITION OF THE PAPER INCLUDED SUCH WILSON QUOTES AS "I DON'T WANT TO CONTINUE IN POWER FOR A LONG TIME" AND "I REJECT THE NOTION THAT WITHOUT ME EVERYTHING WILL GO BAD". HEADLINE WAS "SPLENDID WITHDRAWAL OF WILSON" AND "HE SKILLFULLY DEALT WITH ECONOMIC CONFUSION AND OTHER CRISES".

2. THE ROKG SEEMS TO HAVE UNDERSTOOD THE MESSAGE. IN SUBSEQUENT EDITIONS OF THE PAPER THE FIRST TWO QUOTES IN THE PRECEDING PARAGRAPH WERE CHANGED TO READ RESPECTIVELY "NO ONE CAN STOP ME (FROM RESIGNING)" AND "I AM NOT AN
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INDISPENSABLE MAN FOR THE UK". IN THE PAST, SUCH CHANGES

IN HEADLINES WITHOUT LAYOUT CHANGES RESULTED FROM
"SUGGESTIONS" TO THE PAPER BY THE KCIA.

3. THIS IS NOT THE FIRST TIME THAT THE KOREAN PRESS HAS
USED FOREIGN NEWS LAYOUTS TO GET ACROSS A MESSAGE TO THE
PUBLIC WHICH IT WAS UNABLE TO CONVEY IN DOMESTIC STORIES.
DURING THE STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS HERE TWO YEARS AGO THE
ROK PRESS, PREVENTED FROM PLAYING UP DOMESTIC UNREST, GAVE
EXTENSIVE PLAY INSTEAD TO STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS IN
THAILAND. SIMILARLY, FRANCO'S LINGERING ILLNESS WHICH
PRECEDED HIS DEATH GOT EXTENSIVE PLAY IN THE ROK PRESS,
STRESSING THE TRANSFER OF POWER TO A NEW MORE LIBERAL
LEADER.

4. THE TONGA ILBO IS THUS FAR ALONE IN GIVING STORY SUCH
SPECIAL TREATMENT. OTHER PAPERS ARE PLAYING IT STRAIGHT.
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